

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

creating a first license having a first cardinality, wherein the cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license created by a license management device;

transmitting, via first network connection, information corresponding to the first license to a content provider from the license management device;

transmitting, via a second network connection, the first license to a first set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality;

storing the first license in the first set of playback devices in response to a command from the license management device;

~~storing the first license in first digital audio content; and~~

determining whether authorizing playback of the first digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

storing the first license in second digital audio content; and
authorizing playback of the second digital audio content with the first set of
playback devices.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
creating a second license having a second cardinality, the license created by the
license management device;

transmitting, via third network connection, information corresponding to the
second license to the content provider from the license management device;

transmitting, via a fourth network connection, the second license to a second set
of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the second set of
playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and
further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set;

storing the second license in the second set of playback device in response to one
or more commands from the license management device; and

~~storing the second license in second digital audio content;~~

determining whether authorizing playback of the second digital audio content
received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the
digital audio content with the second set of playback devices.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cardinality is fixed.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cardinality is variable.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cardinality is unlimited.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one hardware playback device.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one software player.
9. (Canceled)
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the first digital audio content further comprises video digital programming.
11. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions that when executed one or more electronic systems to:

create a first license having a first cardinality, wherein the cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license created by a license management device;

transmit, via first network connection, information corresponding to the first license to a content provider from the license management device;

transmit, via a second network connection, the first license to a first set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality;

store the first license in the first set of playback devices in response to a command from the license management device;

~~store the first license in first digital audio content; and~~

determine whether ~~authorize~~ playback of ~~the first~~ digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

12. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 further comprising sequences of instructions that when executed cause the one or more electronic systems to:

store the first license in second digital audio content; and

authorize playback of the second digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

13. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 further comprising sequences of instructions that when executed cause the one or more electronic systems to:

create a second license having a second cardinality, the license created by the license management device;

transmit, via third network connection, information corresponding to the second license to the content provider from the license management device;

transmit, via a fourth network connection, the second license to a second set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set;

store the second license in the second set of playback device in response to one or more commands from the license management device; and

~~store the second license in second digital audio content;~~

determine whether ~~authorize~~ playback of the second digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content with the second set of playback devices.

14. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the cardinality is fixed.

15. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the cardinality is variable.

16. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the cardinality is unlimited.

17. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one hardware playback device.

18. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one software player.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the first digital audio content further comprises digital video programming.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for digital license management, the apparatus comprising:

means for creating a first license having a first cardinality, wherein the cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license created by a license management device;

means for transmitting, via first network connection, information corresponding to the first license to a content provider from the license management device;

means for transmitting, via a second network connection, the first license to a first set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality;

means for storing the first license in the first set of playback devices in response to a command from the license management device;

~~means for storing the first license in first digital audio content; and~~

means for determining whether authorizing playback of the first digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:
means for storing the first license in second digital audio content; and
means for authorizing playback of the second digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:
means for creating a second license having a second cardinality, the license created by the license management device;
means for transmitting, via third network connection, information corresponding to the second license to the content provider from the license management device;
means for transmitting, via a fourth network connection, the second license to a second set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set;

means for storing the second license in the second set of playback device in response to one or more commands from the license management device; and
~~means for storing the second license in second digital audio content;~~
means for determining whether authorizing playback of the second digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content with the second set of playback devices.

24. (Previously Presented) A digital data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices having a processor, the digital data signal comprising instructions that, when executed, cause the processor to provide digital audio programming, the digital data signal comprising license having a first cardinality, wherein the cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license having been created by a license management device, wherein a set of playback devices receive the digital data signal in response to one or more commands issued by the license management device and authorize playback of digital audio data if the license included in the computer data signal matches at least one license stored in the digital audio data.

25. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the cardinality is fixed.

26. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the cardinality is variable.

27. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the cardinality is unlimited.

28. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices is a hardware playback device.

29. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices is a software player.

30. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the first digital audio content further comprises digital video programming.